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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001834

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/10/2015

TAGS: PGOV PREL KPKO CG

SUBJECT: 5TH INTEGRATED BRIGADE MISSION AGAINST FDLR IN VIRUNGA CONTINUES

REF: A. KINSHASA 01831

1B. KINSHASA 01814

Classified By: PolOff TJNaber, reasons 1.4 b/d.

11. (C) The FARDC 5th Integrated Brigade is continuing operations in its mission to remove FDLR rebels from Virunga National Park, North Kivu. Launched October 31 as part of Operation North Nexus (reftel), this was the first military action involving an integrated FARDC brigade in the Kivus. To date, FARDC forces have apprehended 13 FDLR and destroyed five militia camps in Busesa and Mazindanga. According to MONUC Eastern Division Military Headquarters, 45 FDLR have fled the park and subsequently engaged in looting near Kanyabayonga.

12. (C) The 13 captured FDLR militia will be screened by a MONUC DDRRR team. According to MONUC, if the team determines that the soldiers are indeed foreign military and if the soldiers want to voluntarily repatriate, MONUC will escort them to the Rwandan border. If they are not voluntary repatriants however, the GDRC must either detain them or forcibly repatriate them to Rwanda.

13. (C) The MONUC DDRRR chief also reported to poloff that in a previous action in Hambo, South Kivu October 30-31, 18 FDLR prisoners arrested by the FARDC without MONUC DDRRR coordination said they were unwilling to voluntarily repatriate.

14. (C) Comment: If the current operation, which is expected to continue at least two weeks, is successful in apprehending more FDLR prisoners, the GDRC will face the challenge of what to do with them. FARDC is the only military element in DRC authorized to forcibly disarm militia. (MONUC may only use force to protect civilians.) The GDRC cannot rely on MONUC to repatriate unwilling prisoners, nor can these prisoners, who are foreign soldiers, be integrated into FARDC ranks.

End comment.

MEECE